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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

EMERGENCY ACTION TO FIGHT AGAINST LOCUST INFESTATION IN AFRICA

Letter dated 15 November 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the members of the Group of African States, I have the honour to refer to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and to request the inclusion in the agenda of the forty-eighth session of an additional item entitled: "Emergency action to combat locust infestation in Africa".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I transmit to you herewith an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution.

(Signed) Ramtane LAMAMRA
Permanent Representative of Algeria
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of the African States
for the month of November

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

1. The Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1989/98 of 26 July 1989, adopted the international strategy for the fight against locust and grasshopper infestation, particularly in Africa, and this resolution was endorsed by the General Assembly in its decision 44/438 of 19 December 1989.

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 42/169 of 11 December 1987, concerning an international decade for natural disaster reduction, identified locust infestations as being among the types of natural disasters to be covered by the decade. Similarly, in its resolutions 41/185 of 8 December 1986 and 43/203 of 20 December 1988, the General Assembly alerted the international community to the critical situation created by this plague in Africa.

3. Because of the exceptional gravity and real dangers of the locust infestation recorded in recent months in the Sahel-Maghreb region, experts from the Sahel and Maghreb countries and the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held a meeting at Tunis on 1 and 2 September 1993 which adopted an emergency plan of action (A/C.2/48/6, annex).

4. In light of the aggravation of the locust infestation, at an extraordinary meeting held at Algiers on 27 September 1993, the Ministers of Agriculture responsible for locust control in the countries of the Maghreb and of the Sahel and the representative of FAO endorsed the emergency plan of action prepared by the experts and called the attention of the international community to the potential dangers of this disaster and its economic, social and environmental consequences for the affected regions (A/48/552, annex).

5. Given the urgency of the situation and the threat that it currently poses to other regions of Africa, the Group of African States is of the view that a draft resolution must be placed before the Assembly in order to mobilize the international community and support the efforts being made by the affected countries in the fight against the locust infestation (see appendix).

6. Current data provided by FAO show that the situation is worsening, particularly in the Sahel region, and the potential hazards weigh heavily on the countries of the Maghreb and other regions of Africa.

7. It is essential that the General Assembly should act expeditiously on this matter in order to allow the relevant organs of the United Nations system and in particular FAO, whose General Conference is currently being held in Rome, to take all the necessary measures within their fields of specialization for the rapid implementation of the emergency plan of action.

APPENDIX

Draft resolution: Emergency action to combat locust infestation in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling the international strategy for the fight against locust infestation, particularly in Africa, adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1989/98 of 26 July 1989 and endorsed by its decision 44/438 of 19 December 1989,

Further recalling its resolution 42/169 of 11 December 1987 on an international decade for natural disaster reduction, which included locust infestations among the types of natural disasters to be covered by the decade,

Deeply concerned at the exceptional seriousness and real dangers of the current locust infestation in Africa and concerned at its resulting economic, social and environmental consequences, including the reduction of agricultural output and the displacement of affected populations,

Aware that current campaigns for locust control have so far been unable to put an end to the infestation, in particular because of the limited financial resources of the affected countries, and convinced that the fight against the plague, by virtue of its recurrent nature, requires increased and coordinated mobilization of appropriate human, scientific, technical, material and financial resources,

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture responsible for locust control of the countries of the Maghreb and of the Sahel, held at Algiers on 27 September 1993, 1/

1. Expresses its deep concern at the worsening locust infestation in Africa, especially in the Sahel and Maghreb regions, which threatens other regions of Africa, and reaffirms the need to accord high priority to locust control and eradication;

2. Notes with appreciation the efforts of the affected countries and expresses its gratitude to donor countries, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other competent institutions of the United Nations in their efforts to contain the locust infestation in Africa;

3. Calls upon the international community, particularly the developed countries and the United Nations system, to support fully the locust control activities undertaken at the national, subregional and regional levels by the affected countries;

1/ See A/48/552, annex.

4. Invites the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations speedily to implement the emergency plan adopted by the experts from the region at their meeting held at Tunis on 1 and 2 September 1993 2/ and to undertake the relevant complementary activities with a view to controlling the situation in the front-line countries;

5. Requests the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in collaboration with the Secretary-General, to keep the situation under constant review and to organize a pledging conference as early as possible in the first quarter of 1994 with a view to mobilizing the necessary financial and other resources such as aircraft, appropriate chemicals and technical personnel to provide effective assistance to affected countries in their efforts to combat the locust infestation in Africa;

6. Further requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to submit to it at its forty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

2/ See A/C.2/48/6.